

Procedures and Guidance to Implement Certification Policies

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CERTIFICATION OF OBSERVERS (B-61)

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1. Purpose. This attachment to Weather Service Operations Manual, Chapter B-61, Certification of Observers, provides guidance to regional headquarters and field offices as necessary to implement the policies of the National Weather Service (NWS) for observing certification. Also covered are procedures for requesting and administering the aviation certification examination, endorsing the WS Form B-61-1, WS Form B-61-2 (Tower Visibility), and requirements in certification currency including upper air.

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2. General Provisions. The supervising office may be either the regional headquarters or the NWS office having the responsibility of the County Warning Area (CWA) where the observer will be taking observations. The regional headquarters has the overall responsibility for the certification program within its region. The Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC) may be delegated the responsibility for the observer certification program within his/her CWA.

2.1 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Computer Based Instruction (CBI). The FAA developed CBI software which integrates training and testing for its personnel and for FAA contractor personnel. The CBI has been approved by the NWS as a substitute for the traditional paper examinations.

2.2 Training. Training may be given in classes, on the job with a certified observer, or by self-study. The "Training Guide in Surface Weather Observations" is the only training material available within the NWS. The training guide can be ordered from the National Logistics Supply Center and it is also available for sale to the public from the National Climatic Data Center. The NWS has no responsibility or obligation to provide aviation weather observer training outside the NWS. Private industry, such as the Supplementary Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (SAWRS) program, should provide training for its own personnel. Training schools in aviation weather observing are available through the private sector.

2.3 Examination Series.

2.3.1 Aviation. There is one series of paper examinations for aviation certification. There is no specific examination for a particular surface aviation observing program. The examinations are generic and are to be used for all surface aviation programs, e.g., Supplementary Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (SAWRS), Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS), Non-Federal Observers (NF-Obs), etc.

2.3.2 Upper-Air. There are two series of paper examinations for upper-air certification. The examinations include generic questions along with questions pertaining to the radiosonde type used at a given location.

2.4 Administrative Restrictions. The examinations are administratively restricted. The Data Acquisition Program Manager (DAPM) of the forecast office or the FAA facility manager or training official will normally be assigned the examination custodian duties.

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Custodians are responsible for ensuring the documents or CBI software are stored in a secure place and protected at all times. Custodians shall not give the answer keys to anyone other than NWS personnel grading the examinations at the forecast office or regional headquarters. Custodians shall never give examinations or answer keys to any contract personnel for them to administer. Examinations administered to contract personnel must be administered by either NWS or FAA personnel. Examination questions, answer sheets, and keys shall be controlled by the designated NWS/FAA custodian.

2.5 Administering Examinations to Personnel Outside the Region's Area of Responsibility. Normally, only individuals within the region's area of responsibility may be given the examination and/or issued a certificate. Exceptions may be granted to allow administering the examination to individuals outside a region's area of responsibility if it benefits the Government.

3. Eyesight Test. Visual acuity will be determined using the Snellen test. The Snellen test will be made using the appropriate section of a 24" x 11" Snellen Test Chart and following correct procedures. The chart should be adequately illuminated and 20 feet from the person being tested. Each eye should be examined separately while the other is covered with an opaque shield. The row of smallest letters read by the person determines the denominator of the fraction used to grade visual acuity. The numerator is always 20; e.g., 20/20, 20/30, 20/40. If no more than two letters are missed in a line, the visual acuity will be graded as of that line.

4. Demonstration of Practical Ability and Assessment to Take Observations.

4.1 Demonstration of Practical Ability to Take Observations. Demonstration of the individual's practical ability to take an aviation observation should be accomplished by the individual prior to the administration of the written examination. The evaluation of the practical demonstration will only be conducted by a person who holds a valid weather certificate. If the individual fails to demonstrate his/her ability to take, observe, determine, and report weather observations, including reading instruments and identifying distant objects for visibility, the written examination will not be administered until such time as additional training is accomplished and another practical demonstration is passed.

4.2 Assessment of Ability to Take Observations.

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4.2.1 Aviation. The assessment of a candidate's ability to take and record an observation should be accomplished on an individual basis with the evaluator. The candidate will be taken outside to evaluate real-time weather elements and is expected to properly encode the observed elements on the MF1M-10 form. Drawing pictures or illustrations of cloud layers and/or giving the candidate different weather scenarios to encode is acceptable only during clear weather days. However, these aids are to supplement the practical demonstration not replace it. All candidates are expected to evaluate and encode real-time weather elements. Offices lacking a full complement of weather instrumentation (hygrothermometer, sling psychrometer, wind sensor, and altimeter) may present simulated data to the candidate for those elements.

4.2.2 Upper-Air. The assessment of a candidate's ability to take and record an upper-air observation should be accomplished on an individual basis with the evaluator. The candidate should demonstrate the ability to follow proper balloon inflation procedures, safety requirements, radiosonde preparation and pre-release procedures, along with editing and archiving of flight data. Candidates should know how to do comparisons and complete routine upper-air forms and documentation required for each site to complete.

4.3 Supplementary Observations (NWS Only). Certification testing is not required for taking, encoding, or disseminating supplementary climatological data (SCD) observations or supplementary data observations (SDO). Observers should have an assessment and demonstrate their practical ability to take supplementary observations. The regional headquarters may issue a Certificate of Authority to Take Weather Observations, but the certificate will be annotated on the back for SCD/SDO observations.

4.4 Synoptic Observations. Certification testing is not required for taking, encoding, or disseminating synoptic observations. Observers designated to generate manual synoptic observations should have an assessment and demonstrate their practical ability to take synoptic observations. The regional headquarters may issue a Certificate of Authority to Take Weather Observations, but the certificate will be annotated on the back for Synoptic observations.

5. Examination Procedures.

5.1 General. Field supervisors should request the appropriate examination from the NWS regional headquarters or the designated NWS

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Forecast Office. In the case of visibility-only examinations, the request should be made to the Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC) of the NWS Office at the FAA Academy.

5.2 Certification Examinations. Precautions shall be taken to ensure the security of the certification examination. No portion of the examination shall be copied without prior approval of WSH or the MIC of the NWS Office at the FAA Academy. All examinations are to be taken closed book and field supervisors shall designate responsible persons as proctors. The time limit for all examinations is 2 hours and the examination shall be completed at one sitting. Question and answer sheets, when mailed, are to be sent in two envelopes. The inner envelope is to be marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY." The appropriate NWS region, WFO or the MIC of the NWS Office at the FAA Academy, in case of tower visibility examinations will grade the exams.

6. Examination and Certification Locations. Certification testing for observer candidates should be administered at the supervising WFO. However, if more convenient and agreeable to the office manager, candidates may be administered the examination outside the supervising WFO provided the candidate's employer has requested the examination. FAA personnel (contract or Government employees) may be tested at an FAA facility.

7. Requesting the Examination. Certification examinations will only be given to individuals whose duties include taking weather observations except for certain NWS and FAA personnel as listed in WSOM Chapter B-61, Paragraph 8. The person who requests an examination for an applicant should notify the WFO or regional headquarters by letter, fax, Email, or phone, requesting the named individual be tested and where the individual will be working as an observer. A certificate shall be issued and the examination shall be given only to those who will be working as observers. The individual will be given 60 days after the examination to begin taking observations. After 60 days, no certificate will be issued without reexamination. If the observation location is outside the region, the region will record the date the individual took and passed the examination. Any contractor or individual requesting a certificate based on the fact they took and passed an examination outside the region shall be told a certificate will be issued within 60 days from the examination date. Requests outside the 60-day period will not be honored.

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All requests for examinations and certification changes should allow at least two weeks from the date of request to the desired examination date for the request to be processed and the examination delivered. All requests must include the following:

- a. Name, location, and title of requester.
- b. Name (complete name including middle initial as it should appear on the certificate) of the candidate.
- c. The date the candidate is scheduled to take the examination.
- d. The location identifier or station name where the candidate will take the examination.
- e. The four-letter site identifier (SID) where the candidate is scheduled to take observations.
- f. The location the certificate is to be mailed to if different from the requester.
- g. An Email address for Tower Visibility Certificates to be sent as an email attachment.

The following table lists the persons who may request an aviation examination and who may proctor the examination:

OBSERVATION STATION	REQUESTED BY	PROCTORED BY
WFO *	WFO *	WFO * (as directed by MIC)
NWS Contract *	Contractor or Site Supervisor *	WFO * (as directed by MIC)
FAA Staffed Tower/FSS (no CBI)	FAA Facility Manager	FAA Facility (as directed by Facility Manager)
FAA Staffed Tower/FSS (with CBI)	N/A	FAA Facility (as directed by Facility Manager)
FAA Contract or Contract Tower (no CBI)	Site Supervisor, Contractor, or FAA Facility Manager	WFO or FAA Facility
FAA Contract or Contract Tower (with CBI)	N/A	FAA Facility or Contract Tower Manager
SAWRS/Paid A	Station Manager	WFO
* Aviation and/or Upper-air		

Exhibit A-1. Who May Request and Who May Proctor an Aviation or Upper-Air Examination.

8. Examination Administration.

8.1 Proctor Instructions. An examination may be administered at the regional headquarters by any member of the staff designated by the Chief, Systems Operations Division, including administrative or technical support staff. Examinations at all other NWS facilities may be proctored by any member of the WFO staff designated by the MIC including administrative or technical support staff. In most cases, the proctor will be the DAPM or Hydrometeorological Technician (HMT). Examinations given at FAA facilities and/or by FAA personnel must be proctored by the FAA Facility Manager requesting the examination or by his/her designee. Individuals who are not Federal employees are not authorized to proctor examinations except for FAA contract or FAA contract tower facilities using the computer-based instruction (CBI). Examinations proctored by unauthorized personnel will be invalid, and no certificate will be issued. The individual proctoring an NWS certification examination need not be a certified observer. Proctor instructions are included with all aviation examinations (Exhibit A-2).

PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS

- C Unless an individual has demonstrated proficiency, the examination shall not be administered. A "Certificate Qualification Statement" from the employer is sufficient for this purpose. A certified observer may also sign the examinee answer sheet to indicate that the demonstrated proficiency of the examinee is satisfactory. Demonstrated proficiency may also be made to the proctor if the proctor is certified (the proctors certificate number is required only in this case. No other signature is required).
- C Collect any "Certificate Qualification Statements" (observer proficiency).
- C All examinations are to be taken closed book.
- C Blank observation form and scratch paper are permissible. Form and scratch paper shall be turned over to the proctor.
- C 2-hour time limit.
- C Examinations shall be completed in one sitting.
- C Each person taking an examination must show a picture identification unless the proctor knows the individual, i.e., make sure the person taking the examination "is who they say they are."
- C Ask each examinee if they have ever taken this examination or another NWS aviation test before. If an examination has been taken during the past two weeks, do NOT administer the examination.
- C Make sure each answer sheet is properly completed. The name of the examinee shall be printed as it will appear on the observing certificate. Test Series is either 2000(1), 2000(2), 2000(3), etc. Station name is to be complete. Four-letter station identifier is not sufficient, include the type (SAWRS, LAWRS, etc.), name, city, and state. If multiple locations or company wide, make sure this information is included. Make sure the "date" of the examination is complete. This is necessary as a record to determine when another examination may be administered.
- C Persons taking the examinations will not be allowed assistance during the examination except to possibly clarify a question's intent. The clarification must be accurate and not mislead the examinee. The discussion shall be in such a manner not to divulge the answer. Discussion of the questions after the examination is not permitted. Remember, keep in mind the purpose of the examination is certification rather than training.
- C Use multiple examinations when more than one person is being tested.
- C Instruct the examinee to place a circle around the selected answer.
- C The proctor shall sign the answer sheet whether the examinee passed or failed.

Exhibit A-2. Proctor Instructions for Aviation Examinations.8.2 NWS Examinations.

8.2.1 Certificate Qualification Statement. Unless an individual has demonstrated proficiency, the examination shall not be administered. A "Certificate Qualification Statement" (Exhibit A-3) from the employer is sufficient for this purpose. A certified observer may also sign the examinee answer sheet to indicate the demonstrated proficiency of the examinee is satisfactory. Demonstrated proficiency may also be made to the proctor if the proctor is certified. A copy of the "Certificate Qualification

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Statement" is included with each paper examination. Also see

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE	
Certificate Qualification Statement	
<p>The CERTIFICATE QUALIFICATION STATEMENT is completed when an applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated ability (to a certified observer) to properly take weather observations. The Certificate should be used by those individuals who will be taking the written examination at a location other than their own facility. The Certificate should be given to the proctor of the written certification examination. A certified observer's name and Weather Certificate Number is required if the supervisor is not the certified observer to whom the trainee demonstrated observer proficiency. The Certificate should be attached to the answer sheet by the proctor of the examination.</p>	
CERTIFICATE QUALIFICATION STATEMENT	
<p>_____ is under my supervision and is assigned to <small>(Print test applicant's name)</small> take aviation weather observations at _____. <small>(Print test applicant's duty station)</small></p> <p>He/she has demonstrated the ability to take and record accurate and timely weather observations. I consider him/her fully qualified to perform these duties.</p>	
<p>_____ <small>(Supervisor's Signature and Date)</small></p>	<p>_____ <small>(Weather Certificate Number)</small></p>
<p>_____ <small>(Certified Observer's Name)</small></p>	<p>_____ <small>(Weather Certificate Number)</small></p>
<p><i>Failure to include the required name/signature and certificate number on</i></p>	

paragraph 8.2.8.

Exhibit A-3. Certification Qualification Statement.

8.2.2 Assure Proper Security. Administer the examination under close supervision to assure proper security. Do not allow copying or discussion of examination questions. A question may be discussed to clarify its intent. However, it is not appropriate to discuss questions in such a manner to divulge answers. No person has the authority to say to the candidate that a particular question is inappropriate or that a question does not have to be answered. All examinations will be equally administered and persons retaking an examination must be given a different examination.

8.2.3 Closed Book. All examinations are to be taken closed book. Examinations shall be completed in one sitting with a 2-hour time limit. Each answer sheet must be completed, including the date. The proctor shall sign the answer sheet whether the examination is passed or failed. Scrap paper and a blank copy of MF1M-10 may be used during the examination.

8.2.4 Examinations Sent to an FAA Facility. Examinations sent to an FAA facility will be sent in two envelopes, one inside the other. The examination along with the blank answer sheet will be sealed in the inner envelope and marked "Facility Manager's Eyes Only." A cover memorandum (Exhibit A-4) will be included on the outside of the sealed envelope, detailing the duties and responsibilities of securing and administering the examination. The material must be administered within ten days of receipt.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Federal Aviation Administration
Facility Manager

FROM: {Insert Your Name and Title}

SUBJECT: Certification Examination Request

Attached is the requested weather certification examination to be administered under your personal supervision or under the personal supervision of your training officer. This material is administratively restricted. All examination material must be maintained in a secure location until it is mailed back to this office. The completed answer sheet may be copied but must be destroyed upon notification the original was received at this office.

The individual being tested is required to demonstrate an ability to take and record an accurate and timely observation prior to taking the examination. If the individual fails to demonstrate this ability, a written examination will not be administered until such time as additional training is given and another practical demonstration is administered and successfully completed.

Assistance of any type, other than clarifying the intent of a question, is not permitted during the examination. Discussion of questions after the examination is also not permitted. No reference to the agency's handbook (FAA Order 7900.5) is permitted. However, a blank observation form along with scratch paper is permissible. Instruct the applicant to circle the selected answers on the provided answer sheet. A set of proctor instructions is also included with each examination.

Once the examinations are complete, all examination material including scratch paper and scratch MFLM-10 forms shall be returned to this office for grading. A certificate will be issued if the score is 80 percent or higher and the Examination Answer Sheet is properly completed. The examination date must be included on the answer sheet or a certificate will not be issued. If the examination cannot be administered within 10 days of receipt, you must return all the material or call this office to request an extension.

An enclosed "NWS Examination Custodian Statement" form is provided and must be signed and dated by you, the FAA Facility Manager. If the proctor of the examination does not hold a current weather certificate and there is not a weather certified Government employee available for the applicant to demonstrate observing ability, the contract weather supervisor or another contract observer may verify the applicant's ability to take a weather observation provided that person holds a valid weather certificate. The contract weather supervisor/observer will need to complete the "Certificate Qualification Statement" located at the bottom of the NWS Answer Sheet. The individual also needs to include his/her certificate number in the space provided below the "Title" block. Failure to provide the required signatures on the completed answer sheet and any other required form will delay or may suspend the certification process.

Note: This memorandum may be used as a guide in developing a regional headquarters or WFO memorandum to the FAA Facility Manager.

Exhibit A-4. Draft Memorandum to FAA Facility Manager.

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8.2.5 FAA Returning Examination Material to the NWS. The manager or training officer at FAA facilities using NWS examination material must mail all material immediately after its administration, including the scratch paper and MF1M-10 form used during the examination along with the original answer sheet to the NWS office that issued the examination.

8.2.6 Securing the Examination Material at an FAA Facility. All examination material must be maintained in a secure location until it is mailed back to the issuing NWS office. The inner envelope shall remain sealed until immediately before the examination is administered. The completed answer sheet may be copied by the Facility Manager but must be maintained in a secure location and destroyed upon notification that the original answer sheet was received by the NWS. If testing is delayed beyond ten working days, all examination material must be returned in the original sealed inner envelope to the issuing NWS office. An extension beyond the ten working day period may be granted upon request.

8.2.7 Examination Custodian Statement. All examination material mailed to an FAA facility must include an "Examination Custodian Statement" (Exhibit A-5). The completed form must be signed and returned with the completed examination material. The completed "Examination Custodian Statement" should be retained for at least one year. A copy of the "Examination Custodian Statement" is included with each paper examination.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**Examination Custodian Statement**

The **EXAMINATION CUSTODIAN STATEMENT** is completed whenever weather certification examination material is mailed to a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) facility.

EXAMINATION CUSTODIAN STATEMENT

I, _____, certify that the enclosed weather
(FAA Facility Manager's Name)
examination material was administratively restricted and controlled while in my
possession. At no time was the examination material ever compromised.

(FAA Facility Manager's Signature)

(Date)

Exhibit A-5. Examination Custodian Statement.

8.2.8 FAA Facilities. Persons tested at FAA facilities must furnish proof they meet the vision requirements. If the FAA official proctoring the examination is also a current certified observer, then that person will also evaluate the candidate's ability to accurately take the requested type of observation. If the FAA official proctoring the examination is not a certified observer and there is not a weather certified Government employee available for the candidate to demonstrate his/her observing abilities, then the Contract Weather Supervisor or his/her designate may verify the

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candidate's ability to take a weather observation provided that person holds a valid weather certificate. The Contract Weather Supervisor or his/her designate will need to complete a "Certificate Qualification Statement" (Exhibit A-3).

The individual also needs to include his/her weather certificate number in the space provided.

9. Examination Grading and Results. Depending on regional requirements, an examination may be graded either at the regional headquarters or the WFO. If the grading is done at the WFO, then the DAPM or a HMT should be delegated this responsibility.

- a. No office employee has the authority to change answers on any examination for any reason. Questions and/or answers not consistent with Federal Meteorological Handbooks (FMH) or agencies' handbooks shall be brought to the attention of WSH, Observing Systems Branch through or by the regional office.
- b. Examinations shall be graded in a restricted area away from the candidate. Mark all incorrect answers in RED, double checking to ensure accuracy.
- c. An 80 percent or higher score is a passing grade on all examinations. The candidate may be provided the results of the examination in terms of the number of missed questions and general area of needed improvement, but not the specific questions missed. Notify the candidate's supervisor or other designated official as soon as possible of the results (pass or fail only) of the written examination and status of the certification.
- d. Once the candidate has completed and passed all certification requirements, the candidate may begin taking observations. The candidate does not have to wait for the actual certificate to arrive at the station.

10. Reexamination Frequency. Individuals who fail an examination must wait two weeks from the day they took the previous examination before another examination may be administered. After the second failure, it may be necessary to extend the time until administering the next examination beyond the minimum two-week period. Longer waiting periods will allow for additional training and study time. Discretion in determining the waiting period after a


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second failure will be left up to the office administering the examination, but must not be less than two weeks.

11. Disposition of Aviation Examination Answer Sheets. All original answer sheets, whether passed or failed, will be mailed monthly from the regional headquarters using two envelopes to W/OS014x1, Attention: Observing Systems Branch. The inner envelope is to be marked "EYES ONLY - Aviation Certification Focal Point." Tower Visibility answer sheets shall be returned to the MIC NWS, W/SR64 at the FAA Academy.
12. WS Form B-61-1 or WS Form B-61-2. WS Form B-61-1, "Certificate of Authority to Take Weather Observations," (Exhibit A-6) or WS Form B-61-2, "Certificate of Authority to Take Tower Visibility Observations," (Exhibit A-8) for visibility observations shall be issued to those persons authorized to take weather observations. The field supervisor shall keep all certificates readily available for inspection.
13. Certification Endorsements. The endorsement for the locations and type(s) of observations the observer is qualified to take will be annotated on the back of WS Form B-61-1 (Exhibit A-7). Initial issuance of the WS Form B-61-1 will be endorsed by the regional headquarters. Additional endorsements required to document the individual's certificate during an inspection may be accomplished by the supervising WFO at the discretion of the regional office and provided the regional headquarters is notified of the changes. The supervisor at the local observing site is responsible for notifying the supervising WFO or Regional Headquarters when there is a change in location of certified weather personnel. The local supervisor or contractor has 45 calendar days from an employee's arrival or departure date to notify the NWS; otherwise the certificate becomes lapsed. An observer with a lapsed certificate cannot take official weather observations until the certificate is reinstated. Failure to notify the NWS within 90 calendar days from an employee's arrival or departure will result in the cancellation of the observer's certificate. Canceled certificates should be returned to regional headquarters. Canceled certificates due to termination of employment may be reinstated provided the time period between employment is less than 90 days, and the observer has demonstrated observation proficiency at the new location. If the observer meets these two requirements, the supervisor shall validate the information in a letter to the supervising NWS Office and request a certificate.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service

Call Home No. _____ Date _____



Certificate of Authority to take Weather Observations

*This is to certify that _____
is qualified and authorized to take weather
observations subject to the conditions stated in
the Weather Service Operations Manual.*

Regional Director

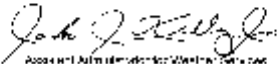

Assistant Administrator for Weather Service

Exhibit A-6. Certificate of Authority to Take Weather Observations, WS Form B-61-1 (Front).

IMPORTANT:





1. A certificate must remain valid a year.
2. The observer must keep properly:
 - a. The observer logs, records, and records on the official station log the type of observation for which the certificate is valid and with the following notation in WSOM Chapter B-61.
 - b. The observer possesses the actual log as required by WSOM Chapter B-61.
 - c. The field supervisor requests revalidation or recertification within 45 days of change of status.
3. Failure to comply with the above automatically causes the certificate to lapse. An individual can not take an official weather observation with a lapsed certificate.
4. A certificate is considered lapsed if it is not used for one year.

CERTIFICATES MUST BE READY AND AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION AT ALL TIMES.

DATE	LOCATION	TYPE OF OBSERVATIONS	INITIALS	DATE	LOCATION	TYPE OF OBSERVATIONS	INITIALS

WS FORM B-61-1 (2-1982)

Exhibit A-7. Certificate of Authority to Take Weather Observations, WS Form B-61-1 (Back).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA -- DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	
  	
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO TAKE TOWER VISIBILITY OBSERVATIONS	
Name: John Doe	Grade: 100%
Facility: Will Rogers World Airport ATCT, OK	Completion Date: Jan 25, 2000
Social Security Number: xxx xx xxxx	
<p>This document certifies that</p> <p>John Doe</p> <p>is qualified and authorized to take tower visibility observations subject to the conditions stated in the Weather Service Operations Manual.</p>	
Date of Issuance: February 2, 2000	 MIC NWS FAA Academy

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY	
<p>Local training shall be conducted in accordance with NOAA/FAA Agreement. By signing this Form, the Facility Manager certifies that the above named person has demonstrated knowledge and techniques that are sufficient to warrant being certified to take Tower Visibility Observations as prescribed by Weather Service Operations Manual Chapter B-61. In addition, to retain a valid certificate, field supervisors shall provide at least annually, within a calendar year, refresher training. Records of annual re-validations shall be documented on the back of this certificate or in a training record/folder.</p>	
_____ Facility Manager <small>WS Form B-61-2 (version 6/99) supersedes previous edition AC Form 3000-36</small>	_____ Date

Exhibit A-8. Certificate of Authority to Take Tower
Visibility Observations, WS Form B-61-2.

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14. Proficiency Quality Control. Any person holding an observing certificate issued by the NWS to take official weather observations may be asked at any time to demonstrate proficiency in taking the type of observations for which certified.
- a. Any NWS or FAA inspector or facility manager/supervisor is authorized to make such a request.
 - b. An NWS inspector may perform proficiency checks of any observer at any location.
 - c. Contract supervisors may perform proficiency checks at their respective facilities only.
 - d. Authority to temporarily suspend an observer's certificate due to poor performance and/or threat to aviation safety may be granted to non-NWS inspectors provided they first discuss the situation with the supervising WFO. If the supervising WFO concurs with the recommendation, then the non-NWS inspector may temporarily suspend the observer's certificate, placing the certificate in a lapsed state. An observer with a lapsed certificate may not take official weather observations.
15. Maintaining Proficiency. Certified observers must maintain proficiency and demonstrate recency of experience in their assigned duties as listed below.
- a. Aviation (NWS and FAA) and Limited Aviation Weather Observations (LAWRS). An observer shall take at least one complete weather observation every 60 days. Observers signed-on to an automated observing system satisfy this requirement.
 - b. Non-Federal Observations (NF-Obs). Observers performing air traffic controller responsibilities shall take at least one complete weather observation every 60 days. Observers signed-on to an automated observing system satisfy this requirement. NF-Obs observers not performing air traffic controller responsibilities shall follow the same requirements for SAWRS.
 - c. Supplementary Aviation Weather Observations (SAWRS, BSAWRS, SAWRS-II). Each certified observer must take and record at least five complete weather observations

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(official or practice) each month on NWS Form MF1M-10C. Practice observations shall be on a separate MF1M-10C from official observations. Practice observations are not mailed to the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC).

- d. Upper Air Observations. An observer shall take at least one complete upper air observation every 120 days.
- e. Tower Visibility Observations. All FAA personnel certified for visibility observations must receive at least annual refresher training in visibility reporting procedures.

16. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Computer-Based Instruction (CBI). The CBI platform may be used by FAA employees, FAA Contract employees and resources permitting by other non-government employees, e.g., SAWRS cooperator employees. The use of the CBI platform by an individual is dependent on FAA policy. The candidate will complete the CBI program in accordance with FAA directives. Contract managers who have the CBI at their facility are to proctor the CBI examination and follow the same procedures as if the CBI examination was administered at an FAA facility. Once completed, the Facility Manager shall send a letter to regional headquarters or the supervising NWS office depending on regional requirements requesting an observing certificate. The request must have the following information:

- a. Facility name and the four-letter identifier.
- b. Student's name as it should appear on the certificate along with the individual's Social Security Number.
- c. The score from the examination that is included in the CBI printout.
- d. The total number of training hours spent before the examination was taken.
- e. The computerized hard copy record of the training and testing of each individual (separate printout for each individual - refer to Exhibits A-9 and A-10). Options: A paper printout of the information or an ASCII text file with the above information on disk. (Note: No certificate will be issued without the above information.)

- f. A "Certificate Qualification Statement" (Exhibit A-3) should be completed and signed by the facility manager. If the facility manager is a certified observer, he/she must include his/her weather certificate number in the space provided. If the facility manager is not a certified observer, the statement must include the signature and weather certificate number of a current certified observer. (Note: A copy of the "Certificate Qualification Statement" is provided with each manual examination. Although it was designed to be used for manual examinations, it may be used and revised locally to be used for CBI testing. No certificate will be issued without the required documentation, signature/s, and weather certificate number.) If the "Certificate Qualification Statement" (Exhibit A-3) is not available at an FAA facility using the CBI, a written statement from the facility manager containing the same "Certificate Qualification Statement" information is acceptable.

57511M: [OBSERVER'S NAME]					
3/24/98, 6:15 pm					
	Status	Score	Date Completed	Time Completed	Last Date of Access
<input type="checkbox"/> LAWRs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				3/24/98
<input type="checkbox"/> LAWRs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	41 of 100	3/24/98	5:33 pm	3/24/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Overview	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/18/98	2:34 pm	3/18/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Know the proper procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/21/98	12:03 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the MF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/19/98	3:07 pm	3/19/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode wind on the M	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/19/98	3:38 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wind	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/19/98	3:39 pm	3/19/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode Visibility on th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	11:51 am	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	11:51 am	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode present weather	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	1:41 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present Weather	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	1:41 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enter Sky Condition on	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:38 pm	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sky Condition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:38 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determining Sky Co	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:08 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encoding Sky Condi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:38 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode temperature a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:53 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temperature / Dew Po	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	2:53 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode pressure on th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	3:00 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pressure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/20/98	3:00 pm	3/20/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode remarks on th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/21/98	12:03 pm	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remarks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/21/98	12:03 pm	3/21/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Practice Exercise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/24/98	1:15 pm	3/24/98
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Test	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/24/98	2:08 pm	3/24/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Test Part 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/24/98	1:33 pm	3/24/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Test Part 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		3/24/98	1:57 pm	3/24/98
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NWS LAWRs Certificate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	82 of 100	3/24/98	5:33 pm	3/24/98

Exhibit A-9. CBI Hard Copy Record of Training and Testing (1 of 2).

57511M: [OBSERVER'S NAME]				
3/24/98, 8:15 pm				
	Last Time of Access	Number of Accesses	Total Time [min]	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/> LAWR6	8:10 pm	1	0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAWR6	8:33 pm	23	733	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Overview	2:34 pm	1	3	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Know the proper phrase			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the MF	3:07 pm	1	33	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode wind on the M			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wind	3:39 pm	1	31	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode Visibility on th			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visibility	11:51 am	4	102	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode present weath			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present Weather	1:41 pm	2	68	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enter Sky Condition on			0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sky Condition	2:38 pm	2	57	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determining Sky Co	2:09 pm	1	27	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encoding Sky Condi	2:38 pm	1	29	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode temperature a			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temperature / Dew Po	2:53 pm	1	6	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode pressure on th			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pressure	3:09 pm	1	7	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encode remarks on th			0	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remarks	12:03 pm	1	18	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Practice Exercise	1:15 pm	2	105	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Test	2:06 pm	0	50	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Test Part 1	1:48 pm	4	32	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Test Part 2	2:06 pm	2	17	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NWS LAWR6 Certifica	8:10 pm	1	205	

Exhibit A-10. CBI Hard Copy Record of Training and Testing (2 of 2).

17. Certification Terms.

17.1 Lapsed Certificate. A lapsed certificate is a temporary suspension of the certificate's validity caused by failure to revalidate the certificate upon transfer, failure to maintain recency of experience, or poor observer performance. A lapsed certificate may be reinstated by the local supervising WFO whenever the conditions causing the temporary suspension have been corrected. The determination that the observer has corrected the deficiencies causing the certificate to lapse may be based on a personal evaluation of the observer's abilities to take an observation by a certified NWS employee or a signed written recommendation from the observer's immediate supervisor stating actions taken to clear the deficiencies (i.e., number of additional training hours, number of

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observations taken with a certified trainer including the trainer's certificate number, etc.) The immediate supervisor may document the reinstatement on the back of the certificate or in the FAA training record for tower visibility. An observer with a lapsed certificate may not take official weather observations.

17.2 Canceled Certificates. Canceling certificates revokes their validity. Certificates are canceled when:

- a. Observers transfer from the jurisdiction of the issuing authority.
- b. Observers terminate employment and are not re-employed as observers within 90 consecutive days.
- c. A certificate has lapsed for 90 consecutive days.
- d. An observer fails to maintain the certification qualifications stated in this chapter.

17.3 Validation. These are administrative actions designed for use by the issuing authorities to ensure only qualified individuals are assigned official observing duties. Types of validation actions are:

- a. Validation upon transfer provides the field supervisor the means to evaluate the job proficiency of newly assigned observers and provides the issuing authority the means to account for certificates. Validation must be completed within 45 consecutive days from an employee's arrival date at the new duty station, otherwise the certificate lapses.
- b. Special validation ensures that observers maintain recency of experience. Whenever issuing authorities determine that a special review of new weather reporting procedures or refresher training is needed, they may institute a special validation action for personnel in their area. This validation shall be documented as directed by the issuing authority.
- c. Validation for multiple locations certifies relief observers, mobile observers, and special project observers for a group of stations or for all company locations. The

certificate may be validated for several types of observations provided the observer is so qualified.

- d. Annual validation applies to FAA personnel certified to take tower visibility observations. FAA field supervisors shall provide at least annual refresher training in visibility procedures to all certified observers. Records of annual validations shall be documented in the individual's training record.

18. Certificate Accountability. NWS regions and the NWS office at the FAA Academy shall establish a system to account for each certificate issued.

18.1 Contents. Minimally, the accountability system shall include:

- a. Name of holder,
- b. Type(s) of observation(s) for which certified,
- c. Location(s) for which certified, and
- d. Assigned certificate number.
- e. Date of issue.

18.2 Certificate Numbers. Whenever possible, number the certificates consecutively using the block of numbers listed below. The NWS office at the FAA Academy may establish its own numbering system for Visibility-Only certificates if so desired. Once a number has been used, do not repeat it on any subsequent certificates. If additional numbers are needed, prefix a "1" before the block assignment. Example: Eastern Region 110,000, 110,001....

Eastern Region	Numbers 10,000 through 19,999
Southern Region	Numbers 20,000 through 29,999
Central Region	Numbers 30,000 through 39,999
Western Region	Numbers 40,000 through 49,999
Alaska Region	Numbers 50,000 through 59,999
Pacific Region	Numbers 60,000 through 69,999

18.3 Transfers. Upon transfer to a new duty station, an observer's certificate lapses after 45 days from arrival unless the certificate is validated by the issuing authority to include the new

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station. To avoid any delays in validation, transferee's certificates should either be hand carried or promptly mailed to the field supervisor of the new duty station. The field supervisor at the new duty station should ensure that the transferee meets the qualifications in Section 4 of this attachment before requesting validation from the issuing authority serving his/her station. A memorandum or Email may be used for this purpose. The field supervisor should retain a duplicate copy on station to serve as temporary certification authority until the action is completed. If the transfer involves different issuing authorities, i.e., transfer between NWS regions, then a new certificate shall be issued and the old certificate shall be returned to the originator for cancellation.

18.3.1 FAA Transfers of Certified Observers to Tower Visibility Stations. If the transferee holds a tower, limited aviation weather reporting station (LAWRS), or aviation weather observer's certificate, it must be reissued or validated to include the new station within 45 days of arrival.

- a. Validation of observer certificates to take Tower Visibility observations is the responsibility of the transferee's new supervisor. The new supervisor shall ensure that the transferee meets the qualifications in Section 4 of this WSOM chapter attachment before certifying the transferee is proficient to take tower visibility observations at the new station.
- b. As transfers occur, certificates will be reissued on WS Form B-61-2 (Tower Visibility Observations).
- c. If the transferee's certificate is on a WS Form B-19, WS Form B-61-1, WS Form B-61-2, or AC 3000-36, then the new supervisor shall forward the certificate to the MIC of the NWS Office at the FAA Academy. The NWS office at the FAA Academy will issue a Tower Visibility Observation Certificate for the new station on WS Form B-61-2, return the WS Form B-61-1 or WS Form B-19 to the NWS issuing office for cancellation, and update the Tower Visibility Observation Certification database.

18.3.2 Validating WS Form B-61-2. After the transferee has demonstrated Tower Visibility Observation proficiency at the new station, the new supervisor shall certify this fact by:

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- a. signing and dating the lower half of WS Form B-61-2 which validates the Tower Visibility Observing certificate,
- b. entering this proficiency certification information in the appropriate section of the transferee's training file,
- c. filing the validated Tower Visibility Observing Certificate in the employee's training file, and
- d. annually validating the Tower Visibility Observation Certificate in accordance with section 20.3d. of this WSOM chapter attachment.

18.3.3 FAA Transfers of Non-Certified Observers to Tower Visibility Stations. There are two groups of non-certified employees: (1) trainees from the FAA Academy who passed the tower visibility certification examination in residence, and (2) employees who need to pass the certification examination as part of the qualifications.

- a. For trainees who passed the Tower Visibility Certification examination administered by the NWS at the FAA Academy, WS Form B-61-2 will be sent to the field facility from the NWS Office at the FAA Academy. The WS Form B-61-2 shall be validated in accordance with the procedures described in section 21.3.2 of this WSOM chapter attachment.
- b. For trainees who need to pass the Tower Visibility Certification examination, the trainee's supervisor shall request a certification examination from the MIC of the NWS Office at the FAA Academy. When the individual attains a passing score, WS Form B-61-2 will be sent to the field facility from the NWS Office at the FAA Academy. The WS Form B-61-2 shall be validated in accordance with the procedures described in section 18.3.2 of this WSOM chapter attachment.

Note: If the trainee did not pass the examination administered by the NWS Office at the FAA Academy as part of a resident course, the procedures are the same as any other non-certified employee who needs to pass the Tower Visibility Certification examination.

18.4 Retirements, Resignations, and Dismissals. When a certified weather observer terminates his/her employment as an observer, the field supervisor shall annotate the observer

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certificate with the reason employment was terminated and the effective date of termination. The annotated certificate shall be returned to the issuing authority for cancellation.

18.5 Record of Canceled Certificates. Unless litigation is pending for which an observer's certificate may be required, the issuing authority shall retain a record of canceled certificates for two years before destroying the record. In the event of litigation, the certificate or record shall be retained for an additional two years after the completion of the litigation before it is destroyed.

19. Station Assignment Certification. In general, the observer's certificate is only valid within the region that issued the certificate. However, to meet the flexibility requirements of weather cooperators and/or contractors who have relief or mobile (i.e., Rover) observers, each region will honor and accept, as valid certificates, observing certificates issued outside the region provided the certificate is current and proper notification is given. The company or contractor must submit through the supervising WFO a semi-annual notification letter to the regional headquarters in January and July identifying those observers whose duties include relief weather observing duties at other company location/s. The letter will include individual names, certificate numbers, and locations where the observers will be working. Interim additions and/or deletions to the company's "Rover" list will require follow-up notification, as necessary, to keep the regional headquarters up to date on the status of these observers. Proper written notification from a company or contractor will prevent unintended decertification of their "Rover" observers.

Properly documented "Rover" observers will be issued two certificates, each having the same certificate number. The certificate the "Rover" carries to the relief location will be clearly marked as "Rover Duplicate" below the certificate number on the front side of WS Form B-61-1. The currency requirements for these observers remain unchanged.

20. FAA Approval. These procedures have been reviewed and approved by the Federal Aviation Administration.